

July 2008

Fact Sheet

Producer Participation in E-Government- According to the 2008 Farm Bill

Background

USDA has made changes in the way it does business with its customers. USDA now provides information electronically to agricultural producers. E-Government is a way for the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Rural Development (RD) to provide information systems that allow customers to receive USDA services electronically.

Producer Participation

For those interested in accessing USDA programs and services electronically, a Level 2 Account is needed. Instructions for obtaining a Level 2 account are available in a step-by-step format on the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> and by clicking on "I Want To" "Do Electronic Business with FSA on my Home Computer." The website for obtaining a Level 2 account is <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthCreateAccount.html> and click on Level 2 access.

Getting Started

Producers who want to conduct their business with USDA electronically using the Internet will need to have a Level 2 Account.

The producer will then:

- Fill out the online registration form,
- Create a user ID and password

- Respond to the confirmation e-mail the system sends to you.

The producer will receive a confirmation email within a few days and **must** respond to that email. If the e-mail is not answered within 7 days, the entire process must be redone.

To complete the sign-up for the Level 2 Account, the producer must:

- Take an official identification (state ID, state driver's license, military ID, or passport to the local USDA Service Center
- Ask to see a Local Registration Authority (LRA) – a USDA employee who can certify your identity and activate your USDA eAuthentication Account
- Request that the LRA ensure that you have a record in the Service Center Customer Database (SCIMS).

The LRA (which is an USDA employee) will:

- Verify your identity against your official identification
- Activate your USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account;
- Check the SCIMS database for your customer record.

When registered with Level 2 access, the customer has the ability to retrieve and submit forms on-line, review their 1099-G form, review FSA payment summary, Conservation program contracts, conservation plan information, and USDA Service Center locations. Producers may also sign up for programs on-line without ever leaving the comfort of their home.

Features

- The Customer Statement allows farmers and ranchers un-precedented online access to their business activities with USDA. Includes their year-to-date 1099G form.
- The site is very secure. To protect your identity, the Customer Statement does not show your Social Security number or Taxpayer ID. Instead, your information is linked to your USDA ID.
- Financial Inquiries allows producers the ability to generate reports showing their current and historical financial information related to FSA programs.
- View and print submitted contracts at any time.

For More Information

Your local USDA Service can provide answers to your questions regarding working with USDA electronically or you can log on to the Montana FSA homepage at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>